

Therapist Jesse Connor, right, works with Dr. Harold Wehby, a retired dentist, on stretching techniques associated with the Egoscue method of pain treatment.



NEWS STAFF/JAKE DANIELS

# Birmingham dentist stretches to find end to persistent pain

By FOLASADE JOHN  
News staff writer

Dr. Harold Wehby has been searching for relief from his degenerative disk disease for eight years. He has tried everything, he said, but it wasn't until about four months ago, when he began practicing the Egoscue method, that he was able to find lasting peace.

The method treats pain through a series of stretches and exercises meant

to correct poor posture, which Egoscue clinicians believe is responsible for all pain symptoms their clients experience.

"I always go after the posture," said Jesse Connor, the only person in Alabama certified to practice the Egoscue method.

"If I address the posture, then I address the underlying cause of the symptom. If you go after the pain, you are just fixing the symptom," Connor

said.

When Wehby first saw Connor, he couldn't turn his head fully without pain, he said. Thirty years of working as a dentist, hunching over patients, led to debilitating neck and back pain.

"If I started out in the morning, by the afternoon my back was so sore I couldn't move," Wehby said.

A neurologist suggested that Wehby

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## DISCOVERIES



### NEW PRODUCT

#### New containers hold your lunch, keep in cold

The Fit and Fresh System includes eight items designed to help people prepare, store and carry more healthful and fresher foods on the go. The system includes a "smart portion chop center," which is a platform to chop, measure and weigh food. The prep-and-pack tray holds seven smart portion containers that can be dated and stored for a week's worth of meals. Almost all parts of the system are freezer-, microwave- and dishwasher-safe. Products are sold individually, and prices vary by item. The prep center is \$24.99 and the prep-and-pack tray is \$14.99. The products are available on the company's Web site, [www.fit-fresh.com](http://www.fit-fresh.com) and at Linens-n-Things, Target and Kmart.

### LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE

#### Clinical trial to study lithium's effect on disease

The ALS Association is funding a clinical trial to determine whether lithium can slow disease progression in patients with early stages of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which is commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease. Lithium is a naturally occurring element commonly used to treat bipolar disorder. Animal studies have shown that lithium protects cells in the brain and spinal cord. ALS is a fatal, degenerative disease of the central nervous system that often progresses rapidly.

### MENTAL HEALTH

#### UAB plans series of forums on mental health

The University of Alabama at Birmingham will host one of 48 free public forums nationwide called "Healthy Minds Across Alabama" on Sept. 14 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Margaret Cameron Spain Auditorium, 19th Street and Seventh Avenue South. The forum will highlight research into schizophrenia, depression and other mental health issues. Parking is available at the Fourth Avenue deck, 1801 Fourth Ave. South; limited free parking is available on the street next to the auditorium.

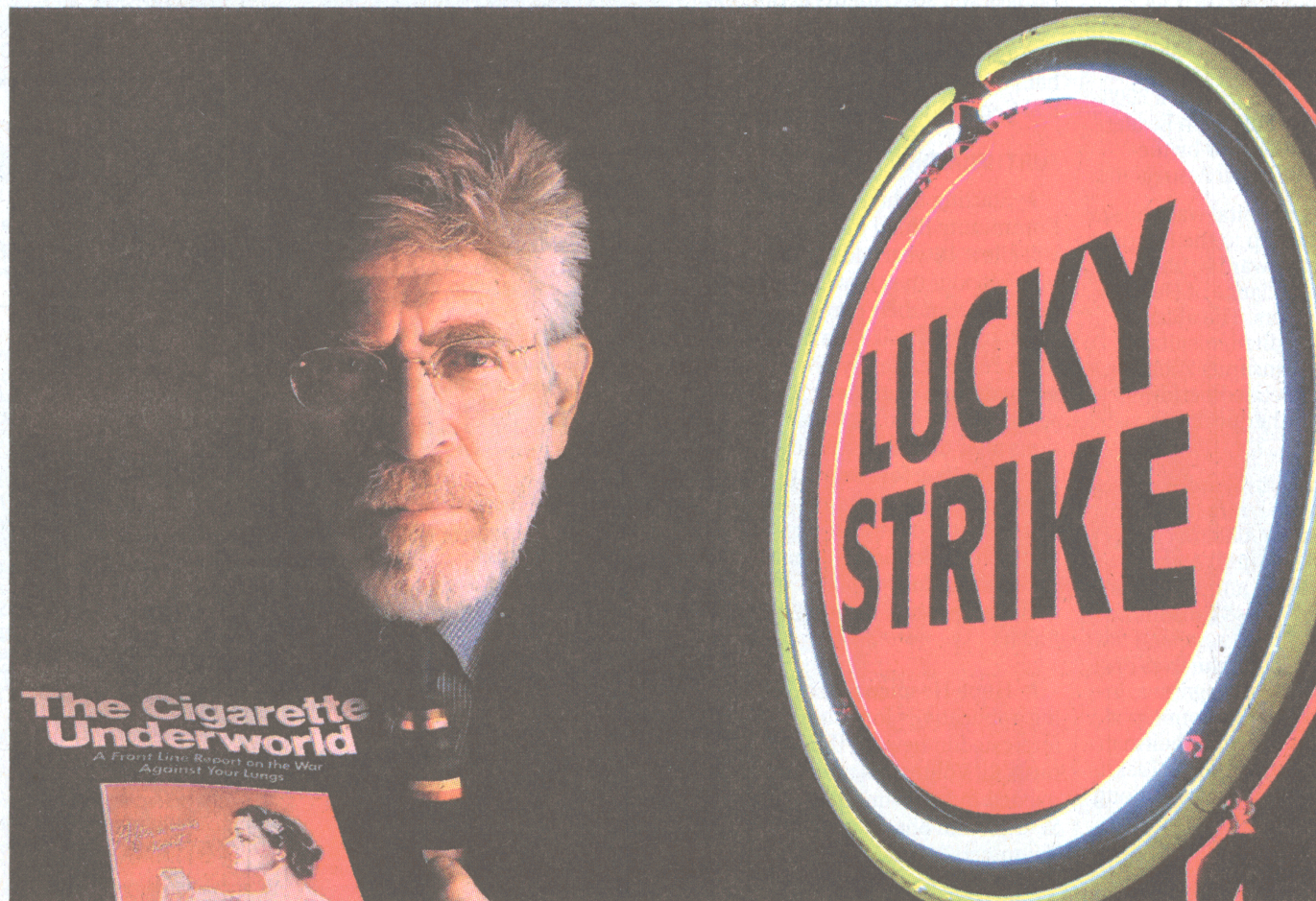
From staff reports

### COMING UP

► **Suicide Prevention** — The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will hold an "Out of the Darkness" community walk on Sept. 13 at 9 a.m. in Heardmont Park. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m. Call 323-4433 for more information, or register at [www.outofthedarkness.org](http://www.outofthedarkness.org). Proceeds go to suicide prevention programs and outreach to survivors in Alabama.

### EXPERT OPINION | DR. ALAN BLUM,

Director, Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society at the University of Alabama



NEWS STAFF/JOE SONGER

Dr. Alan Blum is surrounded by documents and artifacts that tell the often bizarre story of tobacco's role in society and its relationship with human health and the health care industry. The items in the huge collection at the University of Alabama's Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society range from the amusing and quaint to the deadly serious.

# He holds the smoking gun

## Physician directs 'scholarly activism' on the ill effects of tobacco

By DAVE PARKS  
News staff writer

TUSCALOOSA

Dr. Alan Blum knows where the smoking gun lies in the case of who-knew-what-when in the dispute over tobacco and lung cancer.

In fact, there really is a cardboard cutout of a smoking gun among the thousands of documents, tapes and memorabilia composing the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society at the University of Alabama. The gun is an old advertising gimmick for Philip Morris cigarettes.

It's the kind of item prized by Blum, the center's director. The gun says something about tobacco, and it carries an unintended, ironic message, like much of the collection. The documents and items range from serious to silly.

On the serious side are the documents that show how evidence clearly linking smoking and lung cancer was available decades before the American medical establishment publicly affirmed that link.

The archive reaches back more than 20 years. From the 1980s onward — the period during which Blum has been collecting — its level of detail is enormous.

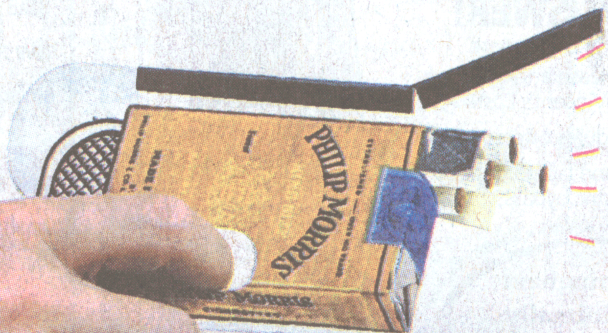
"This is a 30-year daily biopsy of the tobacco industry and its promotion, advertising and marketing, along with the anti-smoking movement," said Blum, who is also a practicing physician and holds the Gerald Leon Wallace endowed chair in family medicine.

Blum has traveled the globe latching onto anything with a tie to tobacco and health. He's attended tobacco conventions and

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Blum's collection includes, counterclockwise from top left, a cigarette box from the Mayo Clinic, a lung ashtray that coughs when a cigarette is placed in it, a promotional "smoking gun" from Philip Morris, candy cigarettes and a ceramic smoking baby toy.



## See it in the funny papers

Steve Boreman's "Little Dog Lost" is our test comic strip for the month of September.

The strip by the Ohio-based artist features a cast of animal characters including Little Dog, The Vulture, Jackson the Crow and Vernon the Tortoise.

We want to know what you think about "Little Dog Lost," which you'll find today on Page 6D. Go to [blog.al.com/bn/comics](http://blog.al.com/bn/comics) and tell us what you think.

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